

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-07
LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 /054 W
-----004067 232355Z /66-73

R 231559Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3905
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 11610

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ELAB, PFOR, GR, TU
SUBJECT: GREEK LABOR LEADER OFFERS TO MEET WITH HIS TURKISH
COUNTERPART

1. THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR MET DECEMBER 23 WITH NIKOS PAPAGEORGIOU, PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL CONFEDERATION OF GREEK LABOR (GSEE), TO DISCUSS THE LATTER'S IMPRESSIONS OF THE AFL-CIO CONVENTION WHICH HE HAD ATTENDED IN LOS ANGELES EARLIER THIS MONTH. WHEN PAPAGEORGIOU WAS IN THE U.S. IN 1976 UNDER THE IVP, HE HAD RESPONDED FAVORABLY TO AN AFL-CIO OFFER TO FACILITATE A MEETING BETWEEN GREEK AND TURKISH TRADE UNION LEADERS. NOTHING CAME OF THIS, HOWEVER, AND SO, PAPAGEORGIOU SAID, HE ASKED AFL-CIO INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DIRECTOR LEE DURING THE CONVENTION WHETHER THE AFL-CIO WAS STILL WILLING TO ARRANGE SUCH A MEETING.
2. LEE THEN PROCEEDED TO ARRANGE A MEETING BETWEEN PAPAGEORGIOU AND TWO TURKISH TRADE UNION OFFICIALS WHO WERE ALSO ATTENDING THE CONVENTION. PAPAGEORGIOU SAID HE HAD TOLD THE TURKS THAT HE WAS READY TO MEET WITH HIM TURKISH COUNTERPART (WHO HAD NOT COME TO LOS ANGELES) TO DISCUSS MATTERS OF COMMON INTEREST AFFECTING THE WORKING PEOPLE OF TURKEY AND GREECE. PAPA-
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GEORGIOU'S MESSAGE WAS ESSENTIALLY THAT THE TRADE UNION LEADERS OF BOTH COUNTRIES HAD AN INTEREST IN DOING WHAT THEY COULD TO CONTRIBUTE TO IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY, AND RESOLUTION OF THEIR DISPUTES WHICH THREATEN PEACE IN THE AREA. THE TURKISH TRADE UNION OFFICIALS PROMISED TO CONVEY TO PAPAGEORGIOU'S REMARKS AND PROPOSAL ON A MEETING (HE SUGGESTED THAT GENEVA WOULD BE AN APPROPRIATE PLACE TO

HOLD IT) TO THEIR PRESIDENT AS SOON AS THEY RETURNED TO TURKEY.

3. PAPAGEORGIOU TOLD US THAT HE HAD MENTIONED THIS EXCHANGE
TO MINISTER OF LABOR LASKARIS WHO ASSURED HIM OF THE
FULL SUPPORT OF THE GOG SHOULD A MEETING TAKE PLACE.
MILLS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LABOR
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 23-Dec-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977ATHENS11610
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770480-0587
Format: TEL
From: ATHENS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19771224/aaaaatfs.tel
Line Count: 68
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 0bcbcafd-c188-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 142327
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GREEK LABOR LEADER OFFERS TO MEET WITH HIS TURKISH COUNTERPART
TAGS: ELAB, PFOR, GR, TU
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbs://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/0bcbcafd-c188-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009